

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

INTERNALLY COUPLED INPUT PATH REDUNDANCY

A communications network. The network includes a plurality of network elements connected by links along which data flows between the network elements, and which together protect against link failures between the network elements and failures of network elements which would otherwise disrupt the data flow between the network elements. The plurality of network elements include a first network element; a second network element; a third network element; and a fourth network element. The links include an active communications link connected between the first network element and the second network element along which the data travels, and a redundant communications link to the active communications link connected between the third network element and the fourth network element along which the data travels. The links include a first protective link connected between the second network element and the fourth network element along which the data received by the second network element is retransmitted to the fourth network element. A method for transferring data on a telecommunications network.